

# NEWSLETTER FROM CONRAD

REVIEW OF THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 2006

## CONRAD ACROSS MONTANA

8/1-3: DC-Votes  
8/4: Fly to Billings  
8/5: W. Yellowstone  
8/6: Helena  
8/7: Billings  
8/8: Billings  
8/9: Billings  
8/10: Billings  
8/11: Bozeman  
8/12: Billings  
8/13: Missoula  
8/14: Libby  
8/15: Libby  
8/16: No Public events  
8/17: Great Falls  
8/18: Helena  
8/19: Manhattan  
8/20: Billings  
8/21: Bozeman,  
Billings  
8/22: Kalispell,  
Missoula  
8/23: Missoula  
8/24: No Public events  
8/25: Miles City  
8/26: Sidney  
8/27: Butte  
8/28: Billings  
8/29: Huntley  
8/30: Hamilton  
8/31: Kalispell,  
Bigfork, Eureka  
9/1: Havre

## Burns Chairs Renewable Fuels Hearing in Sidney

### *Montana Ag Industry Leaders will Offer Testimony*

On Saturday, August 26, Senator Burns chaired a Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee hearing in Sidney to examine renewable energy issues, specifically cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel. The hearing was held at the USDA ARS Northern Plains Agricultural Research Lab.

The Subcommittee is holding the hearing to discuss development of renewable fuels, especially in Montana. In addition to discussing biodiesel and cellulosic ethanol, the Subcommittee will investigate sources of funding for new projects and infrastructure needs to support development.

"I brought this hearing to Sidney so our Committee may hear directly from producers across Eastern Montana," said Senator Burns. "We want to call attention to the developing biofuels industry in Montana and better understand what obstacles we face. With the upcoming Farm Bill focusing so much on renewable fuels, there is a tremendous opportunity for Montana to see new investment and new opportunities for agriculture. The goal of the next Farm Bill has to be keeping more dollars on the farm and expanding opportunities for young farmers and ranchers. Renewable fuels are one way to accomplish that."

The witnesses for the hearing were Dan Downs, Montana Farmers Union, Jon Stoner, Montana Grain Growers, Jerry Bergman, MSU, Garth Kallevig, Stockman's Bank, Sidney (on behalf of the Montana Independent Bankers Association), Thad Willis, Montana Farm Bureau Association, Tom Dorr, Under Secretary for Rural Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Dr. John Ashworth, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy.

## Burns, Domenici to Hold St. Mary's Hearing in Havre Sept. 1

### *Energy and Natural Resources Committee will Hold Hearing on Burns' St. Mary's Legislation*

Senator Burns will bring the Chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to Havre on September 1 to conduct a Field Hearing regarding authorization legislation for the Milk River project and the failing St. Mary diversion facilities.

On June 23, 2006, Senator Burns introduced S. 3563, the St. Mary Diversion and Conveyance Works and Milk River Project Act of 2006, legislation which authorizes major repairs for the water system along the Hi-Line.

"I am looking forward to this hearing so my colleagues on the Energy Committee can see how badly we need to rehabilitate the St. Mary's facilities and Milk River Project. This system is essential for sustainable irrigation and drinking water along the Hi-Line," said Senator Burns.

The hearing will offer Montanans the opportunity to voice their opinions regarding this legislation.

## Burns Works on New Mission for Malmstrom

### *Secures Second Site Visit of Base which Occurred August 22*

On Tuesday, August 22 the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) followed through on a commitment they made to Senator Burns to conduct a final site survey of the assets of Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) in Great Falls.

This second, final visit is in preparation for the potential addition of a new National Strategic Command and Control center for the strategically important base.

Senator Burns took Senator John Warner (R-VA), the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, on a tour of MAFB on Thursday, August 17.

"This new mission will enhance and broaden the strategic importance of Malmstrom," said Senator Burns. "During my tenure in the Senate I've worked to expand and improve the capabilities of this important installation, and this final visit by DOD is the fruit of that labor. We brought the Red Horse

## **LISTENING TO MONTANA**

### **How do you feel about Immigration?**

\*\*Please send us  
your thoughts at:

<http://burns.senate.gov/immigration/>

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Squadron in here a few years ago, and have invested millions of dollars in infrastructure improvements to the base. This new Command and Control facility would play an integral part in our National Defense, as well as the continued battle in the war on terror and I will work to ensure this happens for Montana."

The specific details of the new mission are classified, so personnel impacts are not available. Senator Burns has been working with DOD officials for many months, with the Pentagon sending an assessment team out to study MAFB in April 2006 on Burns' request.

## **Burns Sets Farm Bill Priorities**

### ***Senate Agriculture Field Hearing Listens to Montana Producers***

Senator Conrad Burns unveiled a series of 2007 Farm Bill principles on Thursday, August 17 in conjunction with a Senate Agriculture Committee Farm Bill field hearing in Great Falls.

"These principles are just the starting point of our work on the next Farm Bill. Over the coming months, I will be working with Montana producer groups to develop concrete proposals that will benefit our most important industry," said Senator Burns. "These principles are not intended to cover every issue that will come up during the Farm Bill debate, but they are the issues that I believe are the foundation of legislation that is good for Montana."

Senator Burns invited the Senate Agriculture Committee to Montana to hear directly from producers on the upcoming reauthorization of farm programs. Last fall, Burns conducted a series of Farm Bill listening sessions to get a sense of the concerns farmers and ranchers have with current farm policy.

"The overriding issue I hear from producers is that we have got to find a way to get a fair price for the things that we produce, and we have to keep more of those dollars on the farm," said Senator Burns. "That is the key to providing a future in agriculture for the young and beginning producers. We have to look at this Farm Bill as legislation that is primarily for the benefit of the next generation, because right now, there aren't a lot of kids coming back to the farm. That's a trend we need to reverse, and these Farm Bill principles are shaped with that goal in mind. It is also critical we have a strong energy title in the Farm Bill, as Agriculture can and should play a vital role in securing our nation's energy independence through bio-based renewable fuels."

Senator Burns also noted that international trade issues will play a large role in the direction of the next Farm Bill.

"There is a lot of debate right now as to whether or not we should write an new Farm Bill or just extend the one we have got until there is a new WTO [World Trade Organization] agreement," said Senator Burns. "If our trade partners are willing to get serious about things like market access and tariff reductions, then a short extension is something to be considered. But right now, we aren't making a lot of progress, and some of the issues that Montana wheat and barley producers are facing just can't wait."

## **Burns Hosts Four Seniors Conferences across Montana Events Held in Billings, Bozeman, Kalispell and Missoula**

Senator Burns hosted four "Quality Living for Montana Seniors" Conferences across Montana in August, featuring keynote speeches by Jack Kemp, former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and Republican Vice Presidential nominee in 1996, and Dr. Mark McClellan, the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and Dorcas Hardy, the former Commissioner of the Social Security Administration.

The sessions were held in Bozeman, Billings, Kalispell, and Missoula on August 21-22 and provided Montana seniors the tools and information to maintain active and healthy lifestyles.

